

---

---

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD  
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

---

---

Landmark:	<b>Embassy and Chancery of Italy</b>	<b>X</b> Agenda
Address:	<b>2700 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW</b>	Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>July 28, 2011</b>	Demolition
H.P.A. Number:	<b>10-495</b>	<b>X</b> Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>	<b>X</b> New Construction

---

---

Potomac Construction Group and Valor Development, represented by Trout Design, seek on-going conceptual design review for redevelopment of the former Italian Embassy. The project includes conversion of the mansion to apartments, construction of a three-story addition in the north side yard, and construction of an eight-story apartment building at the rear of the site.

When presented in December 2010 and January 2011, the Board approved the conceptual site plan, rehabilitation of and alterations to the landmark, and the height, massing and design of the residential tower. The Board directed the applicants to refine the design, develop the details, and select materials. Specific areas that were cited as needing further development included the apartment building entrances and the 16<sup>th</sup> Street elevation of the north wing.

#### **Revised Proposal**

Since last presented, the project has been further developed architecturally and refined in consultation with a structural engineer and cost estimators; fortunately, the important aspects of the concept have remained intact. High quality brick, stone, precast, tile and windows have been selected (images of which appear on pages 5.13, 6.1 and 6.2 of the submission). Minor revisions have been made to the tower roofs, however, they continue to serve as an important element of the design, simultaneously creating a design connection with the landmark, animating the tower's roofline, and screening the rooftop mechanical equipment.

While the applicants' goal for the north wing is for it to be a spare and contemporary element, slight modifications have been made to improve the compatibility of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street elevation. The single window opening on the elevation has been enlarged, and trim added around both window and door openings. It is intended that the wall be planted with ivy or some type of vegetation.

While the Board encouraged the applicant to make the Fuller Street apartment entrance more prominent, both it and the Mozart entrance now suffer from having been made too grandiose and overscaled for the project and in comparison to surrounding buildings. On Mozart, the entrance is composed of a full two-story arched opening within a three-story portico at a monumental scale more reminiscent of a major civic building than a residential structure; the portico will be as large as the rowhouses across the street. The 2-1/2 story portico on Fuller is slightly smaller, but would be more in scale with the building if it were dropped in height by one floor and the balcony above accessed from the second rather than the third floor.

#### **Recommendation**

With the exception of the apartment building entrances, the HPO recommends that the Board find the design refinements and materials submitted to be consistent with the concept design and compatible with the character of the landmark. The HPO recommends that the size and scale of the apartment building entrances be reduced to improve their compatibility.